FTAs and PTAs with other countries

2327. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) how many Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and Preferential Trading Agreements (PTA), the Government is planning to sign with various countries;

(b) the targeted gains for India from these agreements;

(c) the current status of each agreement; and

(d) the additional benefits India will have in terms of market access from these agreements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) India is in the process of negotiating Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation with a provision of signing up of Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with Thailand, Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC); a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement with Singapore, a Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation with Chile and Preferential Trading Agreements (PTA) with Southern African Customs Union (SACU) countries (Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa). A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) is being negotiated with Mauritius.

(b) The signing of FTAs with various countries/groups aims at progressively eliminating all tariff and non-tariff barriers substantially in respect of all trade in goods, liberalizing trade in services with substantial sectoral coverage and establish an open and competitive regime that would promote investment and as such is expected to give boost to the bilateral trade in goods, services as well as investment. PTAs are targeted to encourage increased interaction among the business persons of the negotiating nations apart from increased market access.

(c) The current status of negotiations on various agreements on FTAs and PTAs is given in the enclosed Statement (*see* below).

(d) Aprt from increase in market access to Indian goods in the countries with which negotiations are going on, the large market size in these countries will create huge opportunities for reaping economies of scale and scope, from both supply and demand perspective.

Statement

Status of varions agreement

Agreement	Current Status of Negotiations
Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and India	Signed on 8-10-2003, Early Harvest Programme (EHP) will be implemented from 1-4-2005. The negotiations on FTA in goods, services and investment continues.
Framework Agreement for Establishing FTA between India and Thailand	Signed on 9-10-2003. EHP on 82 items has already been implemented. The negotiations on FTA in goods, services and investment continues.
Framework Agreement on the BIMST-EC FTA	Signed in Feb., 2004. The negotiations on FTA in goods, services and investment continues under the Trade Negotiations Committee.
Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and Singapore	Negotiations are being held with Singapore for CECA. Ten rounds held so far, agreement expected to be signed shortly.
Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation between India and Chile.	Signed on 20-1-2005. Negotiations for the conclusion of PTA are to begin shortly.
PTA with SACU countries	A Joint Working Group consisting of representatives from both sides formed to work out modalities of the agreement. Draft text of framework agreement finalised.
Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) with Mauritius	A Joint Study Group (JSG) was constituted to study the modalities of the CECPA. A PTA framework could be considered as per the recommendation of JSG.

Export of agriculture products

2328. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDSUTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total quantity of agricultural products exported during the last three financial years;